



NAVAJO COUNTY

Board of Supervisors

Robert K. Black Jr. • Jesse Thompson • Jason E. Whiting • Steve Williams • Dawnafe Whitesinger

"We are Navajo County"

January 20, 2016

Honorable Ann Kirkpatrick
U.S. House of Representatives
201 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Re: Little Colorado River at Winslow, Arizona Flood Risk Management Feasibility Study

Dear Congresswoman Kirkpatrick,

The City of Winslow and the surrounding area is protected by a levee system that includes the *Ruby Wash Diversion Levee*, offering flood protection on the southern edge of this region, and the *Winslow Levee* offering flood protection on the eastern edge of the City of Winslow. The Winslow Levee does not offer 100-year flood protection and its history of failures has resulted in de-accreditation. Navajo County has been working with the Army Corps of Engineers on a Feasibility Study to mitigate flooding since 2008. The Feasibility Study objective is to assure that the levee system is robust and reliable and includes proposed improvements for the eastern section of the Ruby Wash Diversion Levee and the Winslow Levee to offer life and safety protection to the citizens of the area.

A levee system that protects the region from significant flood flows - 50 and 100 year events, is a necessity for the survival of the City of Winslow and therefore the partnership between Navajo County and the Army Corps of Engineers has grown to include the City of Winslow. The Feasibility Study has achieved the Tentatively Selected Plan (TSP) milestone which outlines the extent of the project, high level design and costs. Navajo County is prepared to fund the local share for the next phase of the civil works project, Planning, Engineering and Design (PED), which has a total cost of \$7.3 million and a local cost-share of \$2.6 million. The City of Winslow has offered to contribute in an equal fashion with Navajo County toward the local share requirements for the construction phase. The total construction cost, federal and local share, is estimated in the TSP at \$59 million. The local sponsors are committed to move forward.

A levee breach will result in most of the City of Winslow to be underwater including many of the public service facilities; schools, hospitals, police station, and phone companies, resulting in loss of phone and E911 service and significantly limiting the capability of first responders to assist in evacuation. Life-safety concerns for the citizens of Winslow remains the fundamental and prevailing concern and drives a real sense of urgency for this project.

At this point of the Feasibility Study we are looking forward to the PED and Construction phases and would like to help drive the expedited completion of the Feasibility Study and initiate the planning for these two future phases. The completion of the Feasibility Study is near term and so is the next Water Resource Development Act (WRDA). This project's complexities has resulted in numerous changes to the timeline. When Steve Stockton visited your office March 18, 2013, the project team hoped to get to a Chief's Report by Sept. 2014. In March 2015, The Army Corps visited your office and offered to get to the Chief's Report by January 2016. The target date for the Chief's Report continues to get pushed out. We would like to work with your office and our Army Corps partners to look for a more aggressive completion of the Feasibility Study and a concurrent effort on the approval of a PED agreement. The proposed target dates are driven by two desired outcomes. First, we want to make sure our project is included in the next WRDA bill and a signed Chief's Report, April 2017, will ensure our project is eligible for inclusion in the 2017 WRDA. The second outcome is to pursue authorization of a "New Start PED" for FY 2018 with the objective of having an approved PED agreement January of 2018. An April 2017 Chief Report will allow for PED funding via the FY 2018 Work Plan funding and/or the FY 2019 Presidential Budget.

Milestone	ACE Projected Dates	County Proposed Dates
Public Meeting	April 2016	April 2016
Chief of Engineer signs Chief's Report	August 2017	April 2017
PED New Start		October 2017 (FY18)
Design Agreement (PED) approved	January 2018	January 2018

Your long term support for this project has been invaluable and we once again ask for your support to help bring this project to the construction phase. We ask for your assistance to expedite this project given that the partnership with the Army Corps remains as strong, if not stronger than when we were awarded the 2012 USACE South Pacific Division's Planning Team of the year, the local sponsors are committed to the local share, this project offers a competitive 2.75 benefit-cost ratio, and finally the project's objective to mitigate flooding and the life-safety consequences for an entire City is valid and appropriate. Positioning this project for WRDA inclusion and a "New Start PED" will help shorten the timeframe to construction by many years and will allow us to provide a robust and reliable levee system to the citizens of Winslow in the near future. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,



Jason E. Whiting, Chairman
Navajo County Board of Supervisors

Cc:
Mayor Boyd, City of Winslow
Supervisor Jesse Thompson, Navajo County